

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 9 and 14 – 20 are pending and under consideration in the above-identified application, and Claims 10 – 13 were previously cancelled.

In the Office Action, Claims 1 – 9 and 14 – 20 were rejected.

In this Amendment, Claims 1, 5, 9, 14, 18, and 19 were amended. No new matter has been introduced as a result of this Amendment.

Accordingly, Claims 1 – 9 and 14 – 20 remain at issue.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims 1-13 and 19-20

Claims 1-13 and 19-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Boltz, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,081,731) in view of *Corrigan, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,640,097).

Although Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, independent Claims 1, 5, 9, and 14 - 19 are amended to further prosecution and to clarify the invention by removing any ambiguities that may have been the basis for this claim rejection.

Claim 1 is directed to an information processing system.

In relevant part, Claim 1 recites:

“...a first information processing apparatus;
a plurality of second information processing apparatuses, each installed in one of a plurality of areas and configured for authenticating the first information processing apparatus located in one of the plurality of areas which corresponds to the area of the authenticating second information processing apparatus; and
a third information processing apparatus for providing content to the first information processing apparatus, the third information processing apparatus located in an another area distinct from the plurality of areas,
....
the first information processing apparatus sends authentication information for authenticating a user, the authentication information is based on authentication screen information received from the third information processing apparatus, and information about the location area of first information processing apparatus to the third information processing apparatus via the network without involving the corresponding second information processing apparatus...”

That is, the first information processing apparatus sends authentication information for authenticating a user to the third information processing apparatus via the network without involving the corresponding second information processing apparatus, with the authentication

information being based on authentication screen information received from the third information processing apparatus, and information about the location area of first information processing apparatus. Moreover, the third information processing apparatus sends the authentication screen information to the first information processing apparatus without involving the corresponding second information processing apparatus. That is, the information exchange occurring between the first information processing apparatus and the third information processing apparatus does not involve the corresponding second information processing apparatus, as supported in the paragraphs appended below of the present application published as US Publication No. 2004/0181662 on September 16, 2004 (emphasis added):

[0080] The image service providing server 2 includes a Web server 13 and an application (AP) server 14. *The Web server 13 receives various information from the user terminal 11, the authentication server 3 or the sale server 4 via the network 1 and supplies the received information to the application (AP) server 14. The Web server 13 also receives various information from the application server 14 and sends the received information to the user terminal 11, authentication server 3 or the sale server 4 via the network 1. Therefore, the Web server 13 not only suppresses the load due to the access from the user terminal 11 but also provides the capabilities of a proxy server for the connection from the outside of the image service providing system to the authentication server 3.*

[0081] *Receiving a request for the authentication of the user terminal 11 from the Web server 13, the application server 14 selects the authentication server 3 of the corresponding area on the basis of the area information received from the user terminal 11 and instructs the authentication server 3 for the authentication of the user terminal 11.* It should be noted that the authentication instruction from the application server 14 to the authentication server 3 is sent to the authentication servers 3 of all areas through the same library (authentication library 103 shown in FIG. 5).

This is clearly unlike *Boltz* and *Corrigan*, taken singly or in combination with each other.

The Examiner states that in *Boltz* the mobile station 20 (first information apparatus) sends authentication information for authenticating a user and information about the location area of the first information apparatus 20 to the home location register 26 (third information apparatus) via a network. However, in *Boltz*, as acknowledged by the Examiner, if the mobile station 20 when roams into a new MSC/VLR area 12, the VLR 16 connected to that MSC 14 will request data about the mobile station 20 from the HLR database 26. Moreover, *Boltz* discloses in regard to the description of FIG. 2, see column 3, lines 30 - 53, that (emphasis added):

“With reference now to FIG. 2, there is shown a portion of the overall network 10 in FIG. 1 and a series of numbers representing a corresponding number of steps, as will be described hereinafter. *The mobile station 20, upon powering up, initiates a registration message to the appropriate MSC/VLR (shown as an integrated device 17 in FIG. 2) in the MSC/VLR area 12 and registers the requisite information therein (step 1 as illustrated). The MSC/VLR 17 then signals the HLR 26 requesting the subscriber data associated with the particular registering device 20 (step 2). The HLR database 26, according to the first embodiment, includes a plurality of data records 26A of carrier restriction information on each subscriber, and forwards to the VLR 16 in device 17 (step 3) an instruction to set a restriction flag record 16A in the VLR database 16 if the particular subscriber has any applicable carrier restrictions. For example, if the subscriber has not paid their phone bill for a given carrier (and is deemed a non-paying subscriber by that carrier) the restriction flag 16A associated with that subscriber is set and the MSC/VLR 17 receives an affirmative indication from the HLR 26 that a restriction applies. The subscriber data, along with the set restriction flag 16A for that subscriber, is then stored within the VLR 16 for later use.*”

That is, any data communicated between the mobile station 20 and the HLR 26 requires the involvement of VLR 16. Therefore, *Boltz* fails to teach or suggest “the first information processing apparatus sends authentication information for authenticating a user, the authentication information is based on authentication screen information received from the third information processing apparatus, and information about the location area of first information processing apparatus to the third information processing apparatus via the network without involving the corresponding second information processing apparatus,” as required by Claim 1.

Further, *Corrigan*, relied upon to overcome the failure of *Boltz* to disclose that the third information apparatus sends the authentication screen information to the first information apparatus and determines whether the authentication information received from first information processing apparatus satisfies a predetermined input format, also fails to fairly teach or suggest this distinguishable limitation of Claim 1.

As such, Claim 1 is patentable over *Boltz* and *Corrigan*, taken singly or in combination with each other, as are dependent Claims 1 – 4, for at least the same reasons.

Independent Claims 5, 9, 14, 18 and 19, which also recite the same distinguishable limitation at that of Claim 1, are also patentable over *Boltz* and *Corrigan*, taken singly or in combination with each other, as are their corresponding dependent Claims for at least the same reasons.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these claim rejections be withdrawn.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims 14-18

Claims 14-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higuchi et al. ("*Higuchi*") (U.S. Publication No. 2003-0050050) in view of *Corrigan*. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 14 and 18 recite the same distinguishable limitation as that of Claim 1, discussed above.

As stated above, *Corrigan* fails to teach or suggest that the content ID (authentication information) is received from the first another information processing apparatus without involving the second another information processing apparatus located in the same area as that of the first another information processing apparatus, as required by Claim 1. Moreover, in addition to *Corrigan*, *Higuchi* also fails to teach or suggest this distinguishable limitation.

As such, Claims 14 and 18 are patentable over *Higuchi* and *Corrigan*, taken singly or in combination with each other, as are their corresponding dependent claims, if any, for at least the same reasons.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these claim rejections be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that Claims 1 – 9 and 14 – 20 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

If the claims are not found to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned to schedule an interview before the mailing of the Office Action. Any communication initiated by this paragraph should be deemed an Applicant initiated interview.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: April 9, 2009

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